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President: Mr. Palma Cerna (Vice-President) ..... (Honduras)

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General discussion

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In the absence of Mr. Oh Joon (Republic of Korea), Mr. Palma Cerna (Honduras), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 7: Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation (*continued*)

(a) Follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council (*continued*) (A/71/63-E/2016/8)

Panel discussion: "Partnership approaches: How to ensure accountability, coherence and evaluation of impact?"

1. **Mr. Dossal** (Founder and Chairman, Global Partnerships Forum), moderator, said that the efforts of Governments, the private sector and foundations should be pooled, while ensuring transparency and accountability, in order to raise the funding to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. He invited the panellists to share their views on how accountability and partnerships would be the drivers of the Sustainable Development Goals process. He also invited them to consider how the impact of the outcomes could be measured and evaluated.

2. **Mr. Mayaki** (Chief Executive Officer, New Partnership for Africa's Development, African Union), panellist, said that, from 1960 to 2000, policies in Africa had been nationally driven and donor-oriented without sufficient planning capacities. Since the creation of the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in 2001, the regional dimension had been enhanced by a growing number of partnerships, more common positions had been defined within the African context and foreign direct investment had increased considerably. Through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), planning capacities and processes had been reignited at the national level.

3. As for current emerging trends, with the significant reduction in official development assistance, improved management of public finances and the mobilization of domestic resources were now given high priority. In the development landscape, reliance on donors had shifted towards greater mobilization of domestic resources and engagement with the private sector. For example, most of the current energy, transport and information and communication technology infrastructure in Africa was fundamentally based on public-private partnership.

4. Africa was also trying to define more common positions, such as the Agenda 2063, which focused on industrialization. Prioritizing industrialization was the best way to create jobs for youth, which was the primary concern of policymakers in Africa, since youth constituted the highest proportion of the population. NEPAD was focusing on industrialization in the partnerships it was developing.

5. The next 10 years would witness increased regionalism and localism, which would affect the role of the State. There was a push for policies to be designed from both the top down and bottom up, with greater participation of civil society and the private sector.

6. The Sustainable Energy for All initiative, designed within the United Nations context, was a good example of a successful partnership, because it had provided an opportunity for alignment and coherence. The Sustainable Energy for All hub located at the African Development Bank offered a platform for integrated multidimensional planning and coordination between the African Development Bank, NEPAD, the African Union Commission and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It also served as an inclusive convening power by including country focal points, civil society, the private sector, bilateral and multilateral partners, the United Nations system and the founding members. Sustainable Energy for All and its African hub had thus developed concrete and actionable tools that should be exploited for the realization of the 2030 Agenda.

7. Africa had also engaged in a series of multilateral cooperation platforms known as strategic partnerships with Africa. In that context, and through its pan-African institutions, it was maintaining robust relationships with India, the Republic of Korea, China, South America, Turkey, the League of Arab States and the European Union. It also valued multilateral initiatives such as the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD). TICAD 5 had provided a window for the participation of the private sector, which had allowed key agriculture and infrastructure initiatives to be implemented.

8. The factors that contributed to an initiative's success included learning by doing; inclusive

involvement of representative multi-stakeholders at the early stage of the definition process; free local domestication of the initiative at the national, regional and continental levels; global consensus and recognition of the importance of the initiative; and coherence and alignment of initiative objectives and tools. Partnerships should be genuine, balanced and aligned with existing plans and priorities. The United Nations development system had a leading role to play in safeguarding those elements of success.

9. **Mr. Dossal** (Founder and Chairman, Global Partnerships Forum) asked panellists to share their views on the best way was to engage with NEPAD to support programmes in Africa.

10. **Mr. Mayaki** (Chief Executive Officer, New Partnership for Africa's Development, African Union) said that NEPAD had established the Grow Africa platform in partnership with the World Economic Forum, which had sought to engage with NEPAD with regard to agricultural productivity and attracting multinationals specialized in agriculture. Grow Africa had created space for interaction among the international private sector, the African private sector and the African Governments. It also involved the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). It was a learning-by-doing process that had led to institutional innovations based on concrete needs at the national and regional levels.

11. **Mr. Dossal** (Founder and Chairman, Global Partnerships Forum) said that the development challenges ahead required innovative financing. The Islamic Development Bank had a number of programmes to support economic and social development in its member States. He invited Mr. Aqa, Vice-President for Cooperation and Capacity Development, Islamic Development Bank, to share his thoughts on partnerships, accountability and uniformity of standards.

12. **Mr. Aqa** (Vice-President for Cooperation and Capacity Development, Islamic Development Bank), panellist, said that no institution could address the increasingly complex development challenges alone, which was why the concept of cooperation was enshrined in the Articles of Agreement of the Islamic Development Bank. The Islamic Development Bank Group, which was the development organ of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, consisted of the Bank itself, the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation, the Islamic Corporation for the Development of the Private Sector, the Islamic Corporation for Insurance of Investment and Export Credit and the Islamic Research and Training Institute and was therefore able to address development issues comprehensively and innovatively.

13. The Islamic Development Bank had historic cooperation partnerships with other international institutions, for example the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC), the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, the United Nations system, the European Union, the World Bank and other multilateral development banks. It had recently intensified its discussions and engagement in those forums to enhance the effectiveness of development cooperation. Its recent discussions with the European Union, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) had led to practical actions in cooperation and partnership.

14. Within the Islamic Development Bank Group, there were many innovative ways of doing business that could add significant additional resources to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and improve efficiency and effectiveness. Over the previous three years, the Is Islamic Development Bank net approvals had averaged US$ 10 billion annually Another funding package would go towards facilitating trade transactions and export credit insurance. The Group also mobilized additional resources, both domestically and internationally,, for example through the *sukuk* (Islamic bonds) programmes for development, most recently in Benin. Other institutions did not explore the idea of bonds and endowments for development, despite the fact that those instruments could transform the way in which poverty reduction, unemployment and other issues were addressed.

15. According to its projections, in the next 15 years, the Bank would be investing around US$ 150 billion into the targets related to the Sustainable Development Goals and, more importantly, would be partnering with other institutions. It had recently launched, together with the United Nations and the World Bank Group, an innovative financing initiative in the Middle East and North Africa Region (MENA), which required the private sector to invest in development and stability. In partnership with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, it had launched a grant facility to address poverty, health

issues, agricultural-related employment, food security and rural infrastructure in the poorest countries. The grant would be provided to countries that could not afford concessional loans to enable them to qualify for loans. While 30 per cent of the facility would be the grant itself, the remainder would be used to unlock concessional loans from the Bank.

16. Although grant resources should continue to be provided, they were not of a sufficient scale to make the significant change that was required for development and poverty reduction. Therefore, the Triple-Win mechanism — whereby grant resources were blended with the loan power of banks and domestic policymakers took responsibility and ownership — would be the way forward in addressing the challenges identified by the Sustainable Development Goals.

17. The main principle guiding the Islamic financial instruments was that they were linked to real economic activity and productivity, making them much more immune to shocks and turbulences. The other guiding principle was financial inclusion, which brought together individuals, wealthy people, the private sector, development communities and Governments to build solid partnerships for development. For example, in Turkey, the Bank had recently been financing a private sector health-care initiative, which was guaranteed by the Turkish Government.

18. Fragility was one of the key challenges that needed to be addressed, not only in terms of conflicts, but also the fragility of markets, institutions and the economy. The Islamic Development Bank could not act as a humanitarian, development or peacekeeping institution, which was why it concentrated on investing in prevention. Since, according to various reports, 31 out of the 33 conflict-affected countries were members of the Islamic Development Bank, the Bank was very concerned about the fact that there would still be 500 million people living under the $1.25-per-day poverty line in conflict-affected countries after 2030.

19. The key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring sustainability and preventing economic shocks was significant investment in youth. More innovative approaches to employment creation and development infrastructure were needed, because the future generation would not seek employment alone, but also an engaging environment for entrepreneurial activities.

20. **Mr. Dossal** (Founder and Chairman, Global Partnerships Forum) said that, after hearing from Ms. Kingo, Executive Director, United Nations Global Compact, the panel should examine how there could be better inter-agency coordination and what the United Nations system could do to lead that effort.

21. **Ms. Kingo** (Executive Director, United Nations Global Compact), panellist, said that in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda, the number, scale and impact of partnerships needed to be increased. Integrity should be the utmost priority in all partnership efforts. The United Nations had made great strides in partnerships in recent years and could learn from those experiences to fast-track future success.

22. The United Nations Global Compact was the United Nations focal point for business. It drove the global responsibility business movement based on 10 universally recognized principles in the areas of human rights, labour rights, environment and anti-corruption. Every year, the 8,000 companies participating in the Global Compact must submit a Communication on Progress, which was a public disclosure of progress in implementing the 10 principles and thus a crucial accountability mechanism. Failure to submit a Communication on Progress could result in expulsion. During its 15 years of existence, the Global Compact had expelled 6,000 companies. The Global Compact also produced the largest annual corporate survey examining how companies incorporated sustainability practices into their strategies and operations. The Global Compact intended to leverage the Communication on Progress and the annual survey to better understand how business contributed to the Sustainable Development Goals and identify new opportunities to drive markets and advance the global goals. Taken together, the Communication on Progress and the annual survey provided models for monitoring and accountability that other United Nations initiatives might wish to consider when designing measures to track partnership progress in the post-2015 era.

23. What happened at the local level would be crucial to the success of the 2030 Agenda; the Global Compact was therefore concerned with turning global goals into local business. In the previous week, it had announced a new Local Sustainable Development Goals Pioneers campaign, looking to identify the best business leaders from big and small companies and change-makers in every region in the world who were already demonstrating how business could be a force for good

and contribute to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The second phase of the campaign, to be launched in June 2016 at the Global Compact Leaders Summit, would assist local networks in developing country-level strategies and activities to prioritize the Sustainable Development Goals and in convening multi-stakeholder dialogues that inspired new partnerships and contributed to national development plans. The Global Compact was using its online resources to complement those local efforts. The United Nations business action hub, business.un.org, was a system-wide platform that brought business and the United Nations together to share partnership and project opportunities, especially at the local level.

24. In January 2016, the Global Compact had chaired a meeting of chief executive officers (CEOs) and United Nations principals in Davos to discuss public-private partnerships and the Sustainable Development Goals. The CEOs had recommended that the United Nations should: break down silos and cooperate across issues and goals; engage business partners more strategically, (as too often, it was felt that businesses were seen simply as a funding resource, despite the fact that businesses wanted to offer the United Nations skills, knowledge and technical expertise); assume greater risks, streamline bureaucracy and speak the language of business; support bold new ventures and learn from partnership successes and failures; build and strengthen local coalitions for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals; and treat companies with the best records and highest ethical standards as preferred United Nations partners. Companies that committed to supporting United Nations values and principles through the Global Compact and reported publicly on their commitment on an annual basis had the potential to be better long-term partners for the United Nations system.

25. The Global Compact played a coordinating, capacity-building and knowledge-sharing role to help the United Nations build coherence, impact and integrity in all business partnerships. Before building new or additional United Nations business partnership guidelines, it must be ensured that the existing framework was soundly implemented using common approaches. The Guidelines on a Principle-based Approach to Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Sector, issued by the Secretary-General in August 2015, offered a critical common framework for upholding the integrity and independence of the Organization in all partnership activities with the private sector. The Guidelines required United Nations entities to disclose all of their business partnership activities, which had also been requested by Member States in General Assembly resolution 70/224 entitled "Towards global partnerships: a principle-based approach to enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners". Without comprehensive disclosure of all partnerships, it would be hard to measure results and strengthen impact over time.

26. As the Guidelines noted, United Nations entities should make their partnership information easily available on their own websites. Business.un.org could serve as a one-stop shop for anyone looking for a full overview of United Nations partnership activity. Great gains could also be made by working together on due diligence. Although the United Nations system already shared partnership risk, it should share partnership risk management as well. By sharing information on the screening of partners, United Nations agencies could ensure that the right partners were chosen across the board.

27. **Mr. Dossal** (Founder and Chairman, Global Partnerships Forum) said that he hoped that business.un.org could serve as a convenient location to showcase success stories and lessons learned and provide a platform for new partnership opportunities.

28. Turning to the lead discussant, Mr. Gass, he asked him to share his vision of what the United Nations must do to implement the Sustainable Development Goals and how the private sector and civil society could help in that endeavour.

29. **Mr. Gass** (Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, Department of Economic and Social Affairs), discussant, noted that, in addition to the business.un.org database, there was the sustainabledevelopment.un.org platform where 1,942 partnerships had registered.

30. A big change marked by the 2030 Agenda was the shift from donor accountability towards recipients to the accountability of the State towards its people. The responsibility for implementation was brought down to the national level, while maintaining the importance of solidarity between countries. He asked whether the new partnerships were strengthening the relationship between the State and the people or connecting and

binding recipients to donors, in which case, it must be determined whether they were still fit for purpose.

31. Given that the second paradigm shift was the commitment to leave no one behind, he asked whether the new generation of partnerships was taking strategic action by identifying the most vulnerable, understanding what risks they faced and prioritizing reaching the furthest behind first, thus creating a bridge between peacebuilding and development.

32. He also wondered whether the values that were espoused by the partnerships were really communicated and conveyed to all partners and whether those values were really part of the DNA of all partners.

33. Given that the 2030 Agenda was very much about levelling the playing field and reducing inequalities, he asked whether the risks were being shared fairly in the partnerships that were being built. Sometimes donors tended to hand the risk down to the partners.

34. Finally, he asked what it meant to be a United Nations partnership and whether a United Nations partnership was different from any other partnership. What were the United Nations partnerships going to contribute to the 2030 Agenda? Did those partnerships have to conform to certain values? Did those values have to be coherent with the decisions of an intergovernmental body? What were the implications in terms of the accountability of those partnerships?

35. **Mr. Dossal** (Founder and Chairman, Global Partnerships Forum) asked the panellists to explain how they envisaged that value creation through collective efforts and to address some of the questions raised by Mr. Gass.

36. **Mr. Aqa** (Vice-President for Cooperation and Capacity Development, Islamic Development Bank) said that by focusing on the root causes of the problems at hand, the interests of the Governments (those in power), the private sector (which was after legitimate profit) and the people (who wanted a decent standard of living), could be brought together. With regard to the situation of youth, decades-old institutions and systems had been threatened in the blink of an eye with massive population movements, a sign of risk and fragility. In such cases, everyone was in it together. In terms of practical risk-sharing, responsibilities and accountability, the example he had cited earlier — whereby grant resources were provided, the Governments took out loans and the private sector invested — brought everyone closer together. Such models were comprehensive, put Governments in the driving seat and allowed the people to see how they were being served and by whom, which brought stability and reinforced the so-called social contract between the people and their Governments.

37. **Mr. Mayaki** (Chief Executive Officer, New Partnership for Africa's Development, African Union) said that, as the main observer and actor at the national level, the United Nations had gained very high credibility in the development landscape. The capacity of States to respond to challenges could not keep pace with the thinking of the private sector and civil society. The United Nations could help to fill that gap, which would allow for better policy design at the national level.

38. **Ms. Kingo** (Executive Director, United Nations Global Compact) said that partnerships were often spoken of as though they were some kind of mysterious thing, even though a partnership was simply different organizations working together to solve a problem in a way that added value for all. Businesses had been working together in partnerships for years, without necessarily emphasizing that or calling them partnerships.

39. In order to implement the 2030 Agenda, there had to be partnerships, cooperation and problem-solving between business and the United Nations. There needed to be a shift from entrepreneurship and experimenting with partnerships to a mainstream phase where United Nations entities partnered with business to create results that added value for all partners. For an organization of high integrity like the United Nations, it was important to choose the right companies to partner with — those that had the same set of values and world view — in order to avoid exposure to reputational risk. All businesses that partnered with United Nations entities could be asked to comply with the 10 business principles of the Global Compact, so as to ensure that a minimum standard was observed. Best practices could be identified across United Nations agencies for monitoring the progress of partnerships and their integrity, and for evaluating the companies.

40. **Ms. von Steiger Weber** (Switzerland) said that it was important to look at what differentiated United Nations partnerships from other partnerships, because

that difference brought added value and would be vital to implementing the 2030 Agenda. United Nations operations were essentially risk business, because development was risk. It was therefore important to develop a culture of learning, namely learning from failures. The United Nations could allocate more resources building a culture of risk management, using the 2030 Agenda as a starting point. As the universal repository of the norms to which all Member States had signed up, the United Nations must continue to ensure due diligence, accountability and transparency when engaging in partnerships. The United Nations operational system needed to be less bureaucratic in order to effectively fill the gap between Governments and civil society and the private sector. The Global Compact should encourage its participants to emphasize sustainable development, and it should also reach out to investors.

41. She asked what the United Nations needed to do in order to bring the Islamic Development Bank and Global Compact partners on board to make a difference in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

42. **Ms. Naeem** (Observer for Maldives), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States, said that the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals would require the ownership of actors at all levels. Development cooperation matchmaking and partnership forums were quickly catching up to traditional aid practices. It must now be determined how to ensure follow-up to those partnerships and how to manage the ever increasing number of partnerships.

43. The purpose of the Small Island Developing States Partnership Framework, established under the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (Samoa Pathway), was to follow up the over 300 partnerships — a large number of which were between Member States and United Nations agencies and the United Nations development system — that had been announced at the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States in Samoa. The Private Sector Partnerships Forum, held in Samoa, had its own follow-up mechanism and a second follow-up session had been held.

44. There was an urgent need to establish common reporting templates in order to determine whether those partnerships were working and what challenges existed on the ground. To enable partnerships to report easily, a standardized uniform reporting template was currently being developed, which would allow comparisons to be made across a uniform platform and reveal the common challenges, trends and best practices.

45. **Mr. Dossal** (Founder and Chairman, Global Partnerships Forum) said that Member States must be willing to accept some risk when engaging in partnerships. The establishment of common reporting and common norms and standards, which could be led by the Economic and Social Council, could enable partnerships to flourish.

46. Although the Global Compact had over 12,000 signatories, those companies did not enter into partnerships through the Global Compact. The business.un.org website had not even been populated by the United Nations system, whereas the Sustainable Development Goals website had. Those two initiatives were therefore residing separately in the United Nations system. The United Nations needed to take leadership in that regard.

47. He asked the panellists to explain what they would do to support intergovernmental collaboration and to contribute to the establishment of norms and standards.

48. **Ms. Kingo** (Executive Director, United Nations Global Compact) said that the Global Compact regularly consulted the business.un.org website to gain insights from some of the encouraging partnerships that already existed between the United Nations and businesses. One possible foundation on which to begin to build a learning culture in the area of partnership was the UN-Business Focal Point group, which had been discussing minimum standards and common processes across the United Nations. The United Nations system needed to prepare for the risks that would come with an increased number of partnerships and exercise due diligence. Minimum standards, learning and reporting should be established across the system to achieve operational excellence in business partnerships.

49. **Mr. Dossal** (Founder and Chairman, Global Partnerships Forum), noting the strategic partnership that Mr. Mayaki had formed with the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, asked how similar initiatives could be created by the United Nations. He agreed that the United Nations could provide credibility and leadership and asked how norms and standards could be set by the United Nations for multi-stakeholder partnerships.

50. **Mr. Mayaki** (Chief Executive Officer, New Partnership for Africa's Development, African Union) said that, on the Grow Africa platform, the African Union and FAO were attempting to ensure that private investors would apply the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems within the letters of intent regarding agriculture production. In 2015, the African Union, in cooperation with the Global Compact, had presented 16 regional infrastructure projects, which had been given priority within the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa. Through such cooperation, the African Union had been able to design a continental business network that would be informed of those regional infrastructure projects. It had also been able to tackle the crucial issue of early-stage project preparation by exploring potential ways to fill the gap in capacity. The main issue with infrastructure development was not the lack of financial resources, but the lack of well-designed infrastructure projects.

51. **Mr. Aqa** (Vice-President for Cooperation and Capacity Development, Islamic Development Bank) said that competition for resources should be discouraged. Governments needed to be put in charge of local institutions and their capacity should be developed rather than replaced, especially in post-conflict and post-disaster areas, but also across the development spectrum in general. The focus should be on the results and impact of programmes, rather than their volume and size.

Agenda item 7: Operational activities of the United Nations for international development and cooperation (*continued*)

(a) Follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council (*continued*) (A/71/63–E/2016/8)

(b) Reports of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/ United Nations Population Fund/United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and the World Food Programme (*continued*) (E/2015/34/Rev.1, E/2015/35, E/2016/4, E/2016/14 and E/2016/36)

(c) South-South cooperation for development (*continued*)

General discussion

52. **Ms. Kasese-Bota** (Observer for Zambia), speaking on behalf of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, said that the United Nations system needed to increase capacity support at the national level in order to support the implementation by landlocked developing countries of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024. The Vienna Programme of Action stressed the need for partnerships in the implementation of its six priorities.

53. Landlocked developing countries required partnerships and development cooperation, including South-South cooperation, as well as financial and technical assistance, in order to achieve sustainable development. He called for the establishment of a secure, reliable and efficient transit system to help those countries significantly reduce trade costs and increase their competitiveness on the international trade markets. It would also be vital to build upon their productive capacities to enable them to diversify their production, foster structural transformation in order to reverse their declining productivity in industry and agriculture, and strengthen their resilience to climate change and other economic, social and environmental shocks. Private sector development and entrepreneurship should be encouraged.

54. Landlocked developing countries must be provided with the means to implement sustainable development, including increased official development assistance, increased aid for trade and increased support for follow-up and monitoring. Increased foreign direct investment was also needed towards sectors with a strong potential to stimulate economic growth, development and poverty reduction through employment, the transfer of financial resources, technology and innovations, improved management techniques, infrastructure development and increased productivity.

55. **Mr. Favre** (Switzerland) said that the survey of programme countries had shown that the "Delivering as one" approach had improved the strategic positioning and relevance of the United Nations at the country level. The consistent implementation of that approach, which included an adequately funded resident coordinator system and the full application of the standard operating procedures, should be complemented by measures at headquarters level to

prevent entity-specific decisions that interfered with "Delivering as one" at the country level.

56. A strong, independent, neutral and accountable coordination entity was needed to fulfil the system-wide mandate of the 2030 Agenda. Such an entity would be accountable to all members of the United Nations development system, thus strengthening the system's horizontal governance. In order to avoid any conflict of interest, it would have no implementation functions. It should be able to manage funds for system-wide actions to strengthen collaboration among the United Nations agencies.

57. A United Nations system-wide strategy for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda would be an important step that would build upon the comparative advantages of the United Nations, which lay in its normative, capacity-building and convening role. The strategy would clarify the roles, responsibilities and areas of work of each relevant United Nations entity in each type of context, especially in the least developed, middle-income and conflict- or disaster-affected countries, and thereby minimize overlaps, gaps and duplication. The Secretary-General could be mandated to develop such a strategy through the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination, based on the strategic guidance offered by the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review. The Economic and Social Council could be responsible for monitoring the strategy across the system.

58. There was potential for strengthened local accountability and oversight of United Nations activities. A local board could be introduced in order to strengthen ownership by the receiving Government and the main development actors in the country, including civil society organizations and the private sector.

59. **Ms. Fofana** (Burkina Faso) said that, in spite of significant progress, including the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the Paris Agreement, a number of challenges remained. Transforming the world would require changes in behaviour, governance, cooperation and management at the international, regional, national and local levels.

60. In order to implement the new development programme, the United Nations development system should be equipped with an integrated coordination model that would enhance collaboration and cooperation among its various bodies, enabling them to work in perfect synergy and more effectively on the ground. Partnerships with States in the financing of activities and statistical data exchange should be strengthened in order to improve policy formation and decision-making. Programmes should be adapted to the needs of each country or group of countries and focus on eradicating poverty, addressing humanitarian crises, peacebuilding and combating insecurity. Reforms should also be aimed at increasing the effectiveness of capacity-building activities for sustainable development through the promotion of North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation and human resources development. Burkina Faso was studying the proposals put forward in the dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system on providing assistance to countries in developing national frameworks for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

61. While States were primarily responsible for their own development, the United Nations development system had an important role to play alongside them. Burkina Faso therefore called for a system that was more aware of the realities faced by people and could be adapted to their specific needs.

62. **Ms. Derderian** (United States of America) said that the United Nations development system needed to be fundamentally reshaped and reformed to deliver on a universal agenda that was being implemented during an era of declining core funding. Ways of eliminating the divisions between humanitarian assistance and development programmes should be addressed. Mandates and structures should be examined to determine what the most efficient and effective United Nations development system would look like.

63. The 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review should be a strategic, high-level document that articulated what Member States expected from the United Nations development system and sketched the outline of a flexible structure that could help achieve that goal. Space should be left for the details of other processes, such as the high-level political forum on sustainable development and each agency's strategic plan to be negotiated in 2017. There needed to be better operational outcomes, better coordination, less overlap and competition, and increased coherence at the country level.

64. The quadrennial comprehensive policy review had grown into an intensely detailed document that dictated operational and budget matters to a level that

the United States found inappropriate given the scale and complexity of the various agency operations. The agencies should not be so micromanaged or overloaded with reporting requirements that they were unable to deliver any development assistance. The 2016 review would ideally be relatively short; it should point out a clear strategic direction and then leave the agencies to work out the operational details in the process of determining how best to implement the 2030 Agenda.

65. **Ms. Pham** Kim Anh (Viet Nam) said that poverty eradication must be the overarching goal in the work of the United Nations development system. Development of national capacities was crucial to eradicate poverty and respond to development challenges in least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and middle-income countries.

66. The imbalance between core and non-core funding for United Nations operational activities for development posed many challenges to the operation of the United Nations development system, especially at the country level. Viet Nam called on donor countries to honour their commitment to provide financing to the United Nations development system, especially core funding. More must be done to expedite the implementation of critical mass and adequate cost recovery in order to facilitate the operation of United Nations entities.

67. The strategic plans of United Nations funds and programmes should be aligned with national strategies and priorities, which would help to leverage national capacity in the implementation process and mobilize and optimize resources.

68. Her delegation hoped to see further progress in strengthening United Nations system-wide coherence, including the acceleration of standard operating procedures and the establishment of more common services and joint business units. Strong Government ownership was critical to that process. Surveys from "Delivering as one" pilot and self-starter countries reflected enhanced coherence, relevance and efficiency of the United Nations development system in those countries. The "Green One UN House" in Viet Nam had helped reduce transaction costs and enhance collaboration. Her delegation therefore encouraged the development system to learn from what had worked, while reiterating that a one-size-fits-all approach should not be taken. The implementation of "Delivering as one" and other modalities must suit the specific characteristics and requirements of each particular country.

69. **Mr. Mendoza-García** (Observer for Costa Rica) said that, in order to adapt to the new realities, the United Nations system should be guided by the principle of efficiency, which should include a better system of accountability and greater transparency. Only when the system could demonstrate its efficiency would countries be encouraged to free up more resources. Rather than spreading itself too thin, the system must be focused, coordinated and optimized. Collective actions and common responses should be in the best interests of both the system and Member States. Decisions should be aligned, always recognizing the links among the economic, social and environmental dimensions, which was a complex task that required a break from organizational silos and traditional mentalities. In that connection, her delegation fully endorsed the principles of universality, comprehensiveness and leaving no one behind.

70. The United Nations development system must be able to provide collective responses to all the countries and people in need of them. Such responses should recognize the multidimensional nature of poverty in order to overcome it and the multidimensionality of sustainable development in order to implement it. The system could not continue to build its work strategies on the basis of a per capita income indicator. An information revolution should be initiated to produce segregated, evidence-based information, which would help form adequate responses to current demands.

71. Costa Rica supported the calls for greater predictability of funding and the creation of incentives for traditional and non-traditional donors. Disarmament would be one of the best and most intelligent forms of innovative financing; it would free up substantial resources for the advancement of all people. His country could not understand how a world that was supposed to become more sustainable could have room for a perverse arms trade that perpetuated dependency and violence.

72. Costa Rica did not support a model that encouraged competition between the United Nations agencies; instead, it advocated a model that provided guidance, was flexible, encouraged cooperation and promoted the integration and active participation of various agencies in each one of the Sustainable

Development Goals and targets. The question was whether it would be necessary to modify the mandates of specialized agencies, programmes and funds to achieve that objective. How could a universal agenda possibly be implemented if it was built on a silo-based organizational structure? How could a system that encouraged competition between agencies and programmes possibly foster collaboration and innovation?

73. South-South and triangular cooperation could continue to make a valuable contribution as a complement to other cooperation models, but considerable resources would be required to make such cooperation more efficient and more global. Multilateral and multiparty funds could be viable options in that regard. Such cooperation would also encourage the creation and exchange of capacities and knowledge, particularly among middle-income countries.

74. New work models should be promoted among groups of countries that did not have specific strategies, such as middle-income countries. The United Nations development system did not have an integrated strategy for such countries, despite the fact that many reports had stressed the need for one. Although cooperation efforts had been undertaken in those countries, nothing was known of their impact and any follow-up to them, which once again called into question the efficiency of the system.

75. Progressing towards the attainment of sustainable development for all vulnerable persons, regardless of where they were located, should be in the interest of the Organization in order not only to address the needs of the large number of pockets of global poverty that were found in those countries, as well as countries that had recently entered and were about to enter the category of least developed countries, but also to contribute to building the institutional expertise that was needed in the next stage of development.

76. **Mr. Estreme** (Argentina) said that over the previous decade, many delegations had expressed concern about the stagnation of funding for the essential functions of the United Nations system from core resources, as compared to the exponential growth of non-core funding. The fact that funding of development activities from non-core resources had increased from 50 per cent in 1998 to 76 per cent in 2014 presented the system with a major challenge. Given the restricted and unpredictable nature of non-core funding, there were clear advantages to funding United Nations activities through the core budget, including the possibility of aligning the system with the priorities of Member States and with the principles of national ownership and neutrality.

77. Unfortunately, the repeated calls to address the imbalance between core and non-core resources had not had the desired effect. In that regard, oversight and accountability systems must be improved in order to build greater trust among donor countries. While emphasizing the importance of results-based management and accountability, Argentina urged delegations not to ignore the danger of donor countries being guided by a desire to raise their political profile and achieve results in the short term when making their financing decisions.

78. The composition and functioning of the governing bodies of funds and programmes should be reviewed. The question of achieving fair representation in the agencies of the system should be addressed from both a gender and a geographical perspective. The current imbalance in the membership of the executive boards of the funds and programmes meant that developing countries had little say in decision-making on matters that affected them directly. The development system needed to be flexible. It must be able to adapt to the different needs of countries. and provide support to least developed countries, small island developing States, landlocked developing States, middle-income countries and, given the universal nature of the 2030 Agenda, developed countries as well.

79. As noted in the report of the Secretary-General on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (A/71/63-E/2016/8), the fact that the United Nations development system remained the preferred partner of States was significant. Reinventing the wheel, and structural reform for the sake of reform should therefore be avoided. Quadrennial comprehensive policy review negotiations should be ambitious yet realistic and over the lifetime of the 2030 agenda, continually seek to improve the development system.

80. **Ms. Fladby** (Observer for Norway) said that successful implementation of the "Delivering as one" modality depended on strong national ownership. The tracking of the implementation of the core elements of the standard operating procedures showed that there

was room for further progress; Norway urged all country teams, in close consultation with their host Governments, to make active use of that guidance.

81. Norway welcomed the emphasis on "Operating as one". It noted with appreciation the substantial cost avoidance and the quality improvements documented in the midterm evaluation of the pilot phase of the Business Operations Strategy of the United Nations Development Group. It hoped to see more country teams agree on a business operations strategy and encouraged the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group to continue their cost-saving endeavours.

82. Norway had hoped for even greater progress in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment. The percentages of entities with a gender strategy and of entities meeting the requirements of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women remained low. It was disappointing that none of the United Nations entities met the allocation commitment in the Secretary-General's seven-point action plan on gender-responsive peacebuilding.

83. The next quadrennial comprehensive policy review should be more strategic, and the resolution should define what the United Nations development system should do, not only how it was expected to work. The system needed to be able to meet rapidly evolving challenges and respond to the diverse and changing needs of partner countries. Differentiated models of engagement adapted to country contexts were required.

84. The United Nations development system needed to continue its broad-based engagement in the least developed countries and make stronger efforts in politically fragile countries, building on the instruments developed and experience gained in strategic collaboration across the pillars of development, peace and security, and human rights.

85. Norway was concerned about the discrepancy between what was expected from the United Nations development system and the way it was funded. It would welcome further exploration of models based on the idea that funding must follow function.

86. Member States and the United Nations development system needed to place the resident coordinator system high on the agenda. Availability of proper resources was one of several issues in that regard. A first step would be for the Fifth Committee to agree to cover the Secretariat's part of the United Nations Development Group cost-sharing arrangement for the resident coordinator system.

87. **Ms. Navarro** (Panama) said that the operational activities for development of the United Nations system should be handled with flexibility, taking into account the development needs of each country, and be implemented at the request of countries, in accordance with their own development strategies and priorities. Actions to be taken henceforth should support the management, implementation and execution of programmes and projects for Member States that were aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and consolidating human development in countries. The "Delivering as one" initiative should be firmly centred on achieving results, strengthening accountability and conducting joint assessments.

88. One of the main functions of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review was to ensure that the United Nations system could rely on adequate means to contribute to the achievement of the goals of the 2030 Agenda. The effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and impact of the support provided by the United Nations to developing countries should be evaluated in terms of its ability to help those countries meet their sustainable development needs.

89. With regard to financing, the agencies must consistently address the imbalance between core and non-core resources and urge the United Nations development system to ensure that non-core resources fully complied with national needs and priorities and with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). Donor countries must also demonstrate solidarity with and respect for the priorities of recipient countries.

90. Developed countries and international bodies must keep in mind the particular needs of middle-income countries and engage in more and better international cooperation with them, because those countries were home to a large portion of the world population living in extreme poverty and continued to face significant development challenges. To address development challenges, the operational activities of the United Nations development system must promote different cooperation schemes, especially South-South and triangular cooperation, guided by the principles of

solidarity and mutual benefit and aligned with the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda. South-South cooperation must remain a complement to, not a substitute for, traditional North-South cooperation. The strategies defined for middle-income countries should be flexible, differentiated and effective and that suited their own national characteristics and priorities. The focus should be on strengthening capacity in matters related to public policy, knowledge-sharing and best practices.

91. **Mr. Mamabolo** (South Africa) said that the United Nations development system should operate within the confines of national policies and programmes in programme countries to ensure shared delivery of results at the country level. The next quadrennial comprehensive policy review should redouble efforts in its traditional mandate, which was to define the way the United Nations development system operated to support programme countries in their development efforts. Resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system emphasized that poverty eradication should be assigned the highest priority and be considered the underlying objective of the United Nations development system, an aspect to which South Africa and other developing countries attached tremendous importance. A strengthened quadrennial comprehensive policy review, which was aligned with, and responded to, internationally agreed development goals, must meet the expectations of all States, particularly developing countries.

92. There needed to be a significant increase in core resources in order to ensure that the work of the United Nations in programme countries had a tangible impact. The imbalance between core and non-core resources and the fragmentation it caused were of grave concern. A coordinated and coherent United Nations development system could not be achieved without adequate, predictable and stable funding for operational activities. South Africa was disappointed by the apparent inability of the executive boards of funds and programmes to address the quality and quantity of funding of operational activities for development. National capacity-building should be promoted in developing countries, thereby allowing them to address national priorities and achieve internationally agreed development goals.

93. The United Nations development system needed to review the composition and functioning of the governing structures of the United Nations funds and programmes. South Africa advocated early reform of those structures in order for the system to adapt to current realities. The system needed to improve its inter-agency coordination mechanism with regard to forging strategic cooperation among different parts of the system in programming and operations in countries in complex development situations. Interventions should be made upon the request of Governments to ensure mandates were aligned and complied with national development priorities and policies.

94. South Africa was concerned about the decline of official development assistance, particularly to the least developed countries, and the negative financial impact that had on many developing countries. Traditional North-South cooperation where developed countries played a pivotal role was of paramount importance. South-South cooperation, triangular cooperation and private sector funding must be complements to, not substitutes for, North-South cooperation.

95. **Mr. Alhakim** (Iraq) said that his Government believed in the strong correlation between the increased effectiveness and coherence of the United Nations development system and practical outcomes to assist developing countries in eradicating poverty and achieving sustained economic growth and sustainable development. Operational activities for development must tackle the protracted challenges facing sustainable development by building national capacities in developing countries and least developed countries and empowering them to address their national priorities to achieve the internationally agreed upon development goals. Combating poverty in all its forms and manifestations was the most urgent goal; without poverty eradication, there would never be real, tangible sustainable development in the economic, social or environmental dimensions.

96. The operational activities of the United Nations development system should be comprehensive, voluntary, neutral, multilateral and capable of responding to the needs of programme countries. They should benefit the programme countries based on their requests and in line with their policies and development priorities and thus become an effective tool to assist developing counties and least developed countries in achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

97. Creating a broad-based partnership through the promotion of the role of the private sector and civil society would contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. A structure could be established under the United Nations that would manage the different economic crises and risks and make the necessary recommendations to assist Member States in overcoming the different difficulties and challenges they were facing in their endeavours to achieve economic stability. A global programme or framework could be established that identified more clearly the commitments of the developed countries, which should be compelled to implement the agreement made in Addis Ababa to finance development in developing economies, particularly in light of the increasing global financial crises which had led to a fall in the growth rates in those countries.

98. Programmes that did not match the economic, social and political specificities of each country would not be effective. The United Nations development system should focus on establishing different frameworks to encourage the different dimensions and pillars of governance to support the implementation and assessment of development policies and strategies. There should also be different mechanisms to define the social responsibility of the major actors in society and establish a social values system. Work should be undertaken to establish and strengthen the different governance frameworks at the local and national levels.

99. Capacity-building should be based on countries' specific training needs to allow their different strategies and plans to be implemented at the central and local levels and empower human resources. The effectiveness of training provided by United Nations entities must be assessed to evaluate its impact on productivity and professional and institutional performance.

100. **Mr. Kononuchenko** (Russian Federation) said that the proposal to expand the traditional scope of development work should be approached with caution, particularly with regard to the possibility of joining development work with humanitarian work. It would be dangerous to attempt to shift the responsibility for crises, especially protracted ones, to the development system and to include development issues in the political agenda, because the non-politicized nature of development work had always been its distinguishing feature and great strength. Joint efforts should be focused on improving existing coordination mechanisms for responding to emergency situations, including under the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

101. The policy for operational activities for development should continue to be based on the principle of national leadership in determining strategies for attaining sustainable development. The United Nations development system should assist and support the relevant work of Member States, rather than mould it to comply with its own policies. Reform should be aimed at improving the alignment of the work of the funds and programmes and ensuring the effective use of donations. Aspects of the "Delivering as one" initiative that had not been effective should be discussed in more detail in order to determine whether it was practical to push for a universal transition to "Delivering as one". To guarantee the effectiveness of the work of the United Nations development system, there needed to be sufficient, flexible and stable financing that was aimed at the rational use of donor resources and that took into account the national interests of programme countries.

102. The Russian Federation supported the endeavour of the United Nations to develop partnerships with civil society and businesses in the interests of implementing the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. When forming partnerships, the focus must be on the principles of doing business that had been developed and tested in the context of the United Nations Global Compact in order to avoid the possibility of unscrupulous partners undermining the authority of the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.